

interpret facts, and if we do this we shall often find that an excellent geographical form, evident at a glance when confronting two series, contains single individuals which do not follow the rule, but are intermediate or do not represent the various characters by which the two forms can generally be distinguished. Therefore, though I certainly require that two species should be distinguishable, I do *not* require that each individual of every geographical form ("subspecies") should at once be distinguished. If thirty specimens of a British bird are distinguishable from thirty from the Continent of Europe and one is not, then I must recognise the two forms as subspecies. The one which does not follow the rule may be intermediate or aberrant, though generally it may only be a straggler from the other country, but it cannot give us the right to overlook the fact that there are two different forms.—*Sine ira!*

XLI.—*Note on Tanysiptera dea.*

By Count T. SALVADORI, F.M.Z.S.

MR. OTTO KLEINSCHMIDT, in a very curious paper on the "Ornis von Marburg an der Lahn" (Journ. f. Orn. 1903, pp. 440-507) has already shewn (p. 461) a strong case of the inconvenience of going back in nomenclature to the tenth edition of Linné's 'Systema Naturæ' (1758). In the edition of 1758 the description of *Turdus iliacus* (p. 168) is that which fits *T. musicus* (*alis subtus flavescens . . . linea nulla superciliarum alba*), while the description of *Turdus musicus* (p. 169) is evidently the one which fits *T. iliacus* (*alis subtus ferrugineis, linea superciliarum albicante*). Linné, in the twelfth edition of the 'Systema Naturæ,' corrected the mistake that he had made in the tenth edition, and *T. iliacus* is there described as follows:—"alis subtus ferrugineis, superciliis albicantibus"; while the description of *T. musicus* runs as follows:—"remigibus basi interiore ferrugineis,"

and there is no mention whatever of a superciliary whitish stripe.

I should much like to know whether the supporters of Linné's tenth edition will follow it out and use *T. musicus* for the Redwing and *T. iliacus* for the Song-Thrush*. As for using the names *Turdus bragi* for the Song-Thrush and *Turdus borealis* for the Redwing, as suggested by Mr. Kleinschmidt (*l. c.*), I can only express the hope that the proposal will be considered utterly destitute of good sense.

There is another obvious instance of the inconvenience of using the tenth edition of Linné's 'Systema Naturæ' instead of the twelfth, to which I will now advert. Dr. Hartert, in 'Novitates Zoologicae' (x. p. 48, 1903), has proposed to discard the good old name "*Tanysiptera dea* (Linn.)," which, as he admits, I have shewn (*Orn. Pap. e Mol. i. p. 435*) must be used for the species of the genus *Tanysiptera* that lives in Amboina and Ceram. Linné's *Alcedo dea* (*Syst. Nat. 1766, p. 181*) was established on the *Ispida ternatana* of Brisson (*Orn. iv. p. 525, t. 40. f. 2*), which is unmistakably

* This paper was written before the issue of the July number of the 'Ibis,' where (pp. 431, 432) my friend Dr. Hartert has very boldly used *Turdus musicus* for the Redwing and *Turdus iliacus* for the Song-Thrush. I must say that if the practice of beginning our nomenclature from the tenth edition of the 'Systema' is to have the consequence of upsetting the names of some of the best-known species of birds, we must give up in despair any expectation of stability in our nomenclature. In this particular case Dr. Hartert ought not to have ignored the fact that the correction of the mistake which occurred in the tenth edition was made by Linné himself in the twelfth. Dr. Hartert says that "unfortunately the two names have since [Linné's tenth edition] been reversed, and that it is time that this old error should be rectified and the names used in their original sense." I should rather say that fortunately the two names have been reversed by Linné himself in the twelfth edition according to their real meaning, and that the correction of the mistake should be accepted in accordance with Linné's intention. If Dr. Hartert made a mistake in a paper in the 'Novitates Zoologicae,' and corrected it in a subsequent number, would he like to be held to his former error? or would it be reasonable to do so?

the Amboina and Ceram bird. Brisson also quotes Seba, tab. xlvi. f. 3, which belongs to the same bird. This is quite simple and clear. But now comes Dr. Hartert, who says, "We now begin our nomenclature in 1758 with the tenth edition of Linnæus," and in 1758 *Alcedo dea* was based on Edwards's pl. x., which is a *Galbula*. This, however, is not quite exact. Linné, in the tenth edition of his 'Systema,' gave a description which, I admit, refers to the bird that we now call *Urogalba paradisea* (the reference Edwards, Av. x. t. 10, also belongs to *U. paradisea*), but Linné, though with a query, quotes also Seba's plate, which is that of *T. dea*. So that *Alcedo dea* of the tenth edition is a compound of *Urogalba paradisea* and *Tanysiptera dea*. Later on, in the twelfth edition, Linné, having recognised the mistake made in the tenth edition, distinguished the two birds. He left the name "*Alcedo dea*" to the bird described and figured by Seba and Brisson, and gave the new name "*Alcedo paradisea*" to the bird described and figured by Edwards, and later on by Brisson, which has now become the type of the genus *Urogalba*. What law prevents us from accepting the correction made by Linné? I think that nobody will deny that Linné had the right of discriminating the two birds, which he had previously confounded together. To the first description of *Alcedo dea*, contained in the tenth edition, Linné in the twelfth added the words "*rectricibus medio attenuatis*," thus pointing out a very good character to distinguish *Alcedo dea* from *Alcedo paradisea*. I am of opinion that it is much more simple and natural to accept the correction made by Linné in his twelfth edition, than to go rambling about in search of another name and rejecting the well-known and long-established name *Tany-siptera dea* for the species which inhabits Ceram and Amboina.

But another difficulty presents itself. The type of the genus *Tanysiptera* of Vigors was "*Alcedo dea* Linn.," but if we discard this name on the pretence that *Alcedo dea* of the tenth edition of the 'Systema' is a *Galbula*, what

species must we accept as the type of the genus? I suppose that the new school of Ornithologists will say that the type-species is "*Alcedo dea* Linn." ed. xii. nec ed. x. Having discarded *T. dea* as the proper name of the typical species of the genus *Tanysiptera*, and using trinomials for all the white-bellied species of the genus, Dr. Hartert has considered them all as subspecies of *T. hydrocharis* from the Aru Islands*, this having been the first species of the genus described after Linné. I am, however, of opinion that this proceeding is not right or natural. *T. hydrocharis* differs from all the other white-bellied species of the genus in having the lateral tail-feathers black, tinged above with deep blue, and resembling in that respect *T. nympa*, *T. danaë*, *T. sylvia*, *T. salvadoriana*, and *T. nigriceps*, which form a distinct group of the genus. For this group Heine has even proposed a new generic name *Uralcyon* (J. f. O. 1859, p. 406). According to my views, *T. hydrocharis* is a perfectly distinct species, and by no means a conspecies, and is much more nearly allied to the group formed by the above-mentioned species than to the group having the lateral tail-feathers entirely or mostly white. The division of the genus *Tanysiptera*, as proposed by me (Orn. Pap. e Mol. i. p. 424), into two groups—(i.) *rectricibus lateralibus magna ex parte albis*; (ii.) *rectricibus lateralibus fusco-nigris, superne cœruleis*—still appears to me to be the most natural, and *T. hydrocharis* should be included in the second group. It follows that trinomialists cannot take *T. hydrocharis* as the typical form of the white-bellied group of species, but will have to choose some other species and use a different name. I strongly advise them to go back to our old friend *Tanysiptera dea*!

* Mr. Hartert seems to ignore the fact that *T. hydrocharis* is also found in Southern New Guinea on the Fly River (cf. Orn. Pap. e Mol. i. pp. 456-457).